18. Shri K.T. Golani, Non-official Member, National Road Safety Council

19. Shri Narayanappa, Member Secretary, FOGLOAA

Deep sea fishing

2527. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether D.G.-Shipping is an active participant on the Empowered Committee on Deep Sea Fisheries;

(b) if so, the role of the DG-Shipping in the arena;

(c) the steps that have been taken by DG-Shipping to help find practical solutions to crew availability and safety and locate experienced crew for ocean-going fishing vessels;

(d) complete details of steps and advice given by DG-Shipping on maritime and crew manning duties;

(e) whether DG-Shipping approves inexperienced crew to operate boats; and

(f) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALLU): (a) and (b) An Empowered Committee on Deep Sea Fisheries has been constituted by the Ministry of Agriculture on 17.11.2004 with the aim of regulating policy matters regarding imported fishing vessels and achieving the UN objective to control Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing which has an environmental impact. Director General of Shipping or his representative is a member in the said Committee along with the representative of Joint Secretary (Navy), Ministry of Defence, Director General, Coast Guard or his representative among others. The role of the Director General of Shipping (DGS) is to assist the Ministry of Agriculture in formulating the policies in this regard.

(c) and (d) Most of the deep sea fishing vessels are tuna long liners imported by their Indian owners on deferred payment basis. The owners,

after getting the crew list approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, employ foreigners on board the said fishing vessels. So far as the manning complement is concerned, the fishing vessels' owners are required to adhere to the Government of India's instructions issued *vide* Gazette Notification No.340(E) dated 22nd April, 2004 which stipulate that 50% of the manning complement of deep sea fishing vessels has to be of Indian nationality. Regarding safety of life and fishing vessels at sea, a clause under DGS 'NOC' being issued stipulates that prior to their registry in India the Registrar should ensure that the imported deep sea fishing vessels are inspected thoroughly to verify their Fire Fighting Appliances and Life Saving Appliances.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Non-Completion of NH-31A in Sikkim

2528. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Highway No. 31A in the State of Sikkim has not so far been completed by Government;

(b) if so, the specific reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has approved 2-laning with paved shoulders from Sevok to Gangtok on NH-31A under BOT (Annuity) Scheme on 23.11.2006. Detailed Project Report and bid documents are under preparation. It is, therefore, too early to indicate time by when 2-laning of Sevok-Gangtok section of NH 31 is likely to be completed, as it would also depend on the response of bidders.

Financial Assistance to Sikkim for roads

2529. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased pleased to state the details of financial assistance that have been granted by Government to the various